



Evonne M. Klein  
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Connecticut  
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## TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSING COMMITTEE 2/20/2014

Evonne Klein, Commissioner  
Department of Housing

Support for House Bill No. 5131

### AN ACT TRANSFERRING CERTAIN POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

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Good afternoon Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Butler and members of the committee. My name is Evonne Klein and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Housing (DOH). Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you regarding House Bill 5131 – An Act Transferring Certain Powers and Functions of the Department of Economic and Community Development to the Department of Housing. This proposal is part of DOH's legislative package this session.

The Department of Housing (DOH) fully supports the transfer of the Department of Economic and Community Development's (DECD) powers authorized under Sections 8-37x and 8-13x of the Connecticut General Statutes to DOH, as the new lead agency on all matters concerning housing. Section 8-37x was a DOH statute until the Department was merged into DECD along with this housing statute in 1995. Now that another Department of Housing is formed, this statute should be transferred back to DOH. Among other things, this statute authorizes the Commissioner of DECD to conduct studies and surveys regarding state housing conditions and projects, acquire title to certain housing properties, and to defer payments under troubled loan agreements. Section 8-13x enables DECD to award grants to nonprofit housing organizations under the Incentive Housing Zone program. The other authorizing statutes for this program, which DOH administers, were already transferred to DOH last session.

The Interagency Council on Affordable Housing, which was established through legislation in 2012 to develop strategies and recommendations for the formation of DOH, originally recommended Sections 8-37x and 8-13x for transfer to DOH. However, these housing statutes were mistakenly omitted when compiling the final implementer bill. This legislation will simply complete their transfer to DOH.

I respectfully request the Committee's support for the transfers as specified in HB 5131. I am happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

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